

BWC Strategy Session

Marketing to FORTUNE 500 Companies

On May 24, 2006, Best Workplaces for CommutersSM held a strategy session to provide Network members with strategies for encouraging Fortune 500 companies to join the list of Best Workplaces for Commuters. Patrice Thornton, EPA's BWC Network manager, offered opening administrative remarks and introduced the featured speakers:

- **Susan Bullard**, Best Workplaces for Commuters team member, EPA
- **Ian Todreas**, Marketing Consultant, ERG

Susan Bullard, EPA

Ms. Bullard introduced the Best Workplaces for Commuters from the Fortune 500 Companies list release and presented the Fortune 500 Marketing Toolkit. Ms. Bullard explained that the goal of the Fortune 500 recruiting campaign is to encourage more Fortune 500 employers to apply for the list of Best Workplaces for Commuters and encourage current Best Workplaces for Commuters to promote their designation. Employers using the Best Workplaces for Commuters designation can generate positive public recognition and highlight Fortune 500 companies that already offer commuter benefits to their employees. The list of Best Workplaces for Commuters from the Fortune 500 Companies will be released in mid-October 2006. Applications are due on August 30, 2006.

The list of Best Workplaces for Commuters from the Fortune 500 Companies ranks employers based on the percentage of their domestic workforce that is offered commuter benefits at one or more worksites. The top 20 Fortune 500 companies receive special media attention, but all Fortune 500 companies with

at least 1 percent of their U.S. employees working at qualified worksites are included on the list, regardless of their ranking.

The Fortune 500 Marketing Toolkit is available on the Best Workplaces for Commuters Web site at <www.bwc.gov/support/network-f500.htm>. The toolkit contains new and updated materials from last year's list release.

In addition to the toolkit, Ms. Bullard presented some materials that can be used to market Best Workplaces for Commuters to Fortune 500 companies. A new "facts and figures" document is posted on the Best Workplaces for Commuters Web site at <www.bwc.gov/about/facts.htm>. The facts and figures provide information on the economic, recruitment, and retention benefits of providing commuter benefits. In addition, a summary of the April 14 and April 26, 2006, BWC Network strategy sessions "The Data Are In – BWC Gets Results" provides information on the Best Workplaces for Commuters survey results and a summary of research on Best Workplaces for Commuters impact on employees' commuting behaviors. The summary is available on the Best Workplaces for Commuters Web site at <www.bwc.gov/pdf/strategy-session-5-14-06.pdf>.

Ms. Bullard closed her segment of the presentation by offering support to the BWC Network members. She introduced Ian Todreas of ERG, the presenter for the second half of the strategy session.

Ian Todreas, ERG

Mr. Todreas's presentation will be made available on the Best Workplaces for Commuters Web site,



<www.bwc.gov>. Mr. Todreas provided tips and strategies for marketing Best Workplaces to Commuters to Fortune 500 companies. The following is a summary of his key points.

Key Points

Promoting Best Workplaces for Commuters

- It is important to have a focused plan before starting any marketing efforts.
- Be familiar with the Best Workplaces for Commuters Web site and program to be able to answer contacts' questions.
- Make the Best Workplaces for Commuters message relevant to Fortune 500 companies when encouraging them to apply for the Best Workplaces for Commuters designation. Emphasize that being on the list provides an opportunity to publicize companies' corporate responsibility and leadership.
- The ranking component of the Best Workplaces for Commuters from the Fortune 500 Companies list is a compelling argument for companies that are interested in promoting their image and surpassing their competitors.

Persistence

- Continue to call contacts at Fortune 500 companies until you are told they are not interested. Some contacts might not respond to messages because of reasons other than a lack of interest and need a follow-up call.
- If you do not have a specific contact, start by calling the company's general 1-800 number. EPA is sending a letter to the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) at all Fortune 500 companies encouraging them to apply for the designation. Reference this letter and explain that the call is a follow-up to the letter. The operator might

transfer you directly to the CEO.

Offering Assistance

- The Best Workplaces for Commuters team is willing to offer assistance to Network members to help meet Fortune 500 companies' needs. If there is sufficient interest, the Best Workplaces for Commuters team can generate a list of the Best Workplaces for Commuters from the Fortune 500 companies in a specific area.
- Contact Ms. Thornton by emailing her at <thornton.patrice@epa.gov> or Ms. Bullard at <bullard.susan@epa.gov> if companies request a copy of the CEO letter sent to each company on the list.

Open Discussion

Rita Hildebrand from Pima Association of Governments in Tucson suggested that focusing on rising gas prices and the economic benefits of offering commuter benefits could be a great incentive for Fortune 500 companies. She suggested a strategy for recruiting Fortune 500 companies is to recruit one employer in an industry and then promote a challenge or competition in that industry to encourage other employees to apply to be included on the list.

Closing

Ms. Thornton closed the discussion by explaining that the Best Workplaces for Commuters team is scheduling more strategy session calls, and there may be a second call to discuss recruiting Fortune 500 companies. She reminded the participants that there is still time to join the Race to Excellence. The deadline for Race to Excellence applications is June 1, 2006. Ms. Thornton thanked the participants for joining the call.

